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18 KILLED AS PLANE CRASHES DURING TAKEOFF IN KATHMANDU

A small aircraft crashed during takeoff from Tribhuvan International Airport on Wednesday morning. All on board except a pilot were killed

BOMBARDIER JET WAS BOUND FOR POKHARA

The Bombardier CRJ-200 aircraft owned by Saurya Airlines was bound for Pokhara for a scheduled maintenance when it crashed around 11.00 am. There were 19 people on board the ill-fated aircraft. At least 17 of them were employees of the airline, with the other two being the wife and son of one of the employees who were on board, reports said | P9

CAPTAIN SURVIVES, IN CRITICAL CONDITION

- Captain Manish Shakya is the sole survivor. He is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Kathmandu and is said to be critical
- The Nepal government constituted a five-member expert panel to look into the probable causes of the crash. The airport said the plane veered off to its right and crashed on the east side of the runway

914

PEOPLE HAVE DIED IN AIR CRASHES IN NEPAL SINCE 1955 AS PER COUNTRY'S AVIATION BODY

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

CHINESE INCENTIVE

Chinese technicians are in high demand in 14 sectors where production-linked incentive schemes are applicable. These sectors, which include solar, drones, and cell battery, face huge talent shortage

SKILL SHORTAGE

Most high-tech manufacturing units in India use Chinese-made machinery but don't have skilled technicians. Industry believes visa relaxations could help

Govt weighing options to open Chinese FDI tap

Restrictions imposed at the height of Ladakh clash in 2020 may be eased

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

TWO days after the Economic Survey made a strong pitch for Chinese participation in India's manufacturing growth, top sources on Wednesday told this paper that the government is considering easing restrictions on investments from China. The government's move to soften its anti-China stance comes amid strong calls from industry, especially manufacturers, to ease the visa curbs on Chinese technicians.

A highly placed government source confirmed that discussions are on for reviewing restrictions on investment and imports from China, adding that no final call has been taken in this regard.

India issued Press Note 3 restricting investments from China amid border tension in Galwan river valley in Ladakh in 2020. The government also restricted visas to Chinese nationals arriving in the country and levied high duties on Chinese imports.

The source mentioned above said industry leaders have been raising the issue of their inability to procure equipment as well as Chinese technicians due to these restrictions. "For the past 3-4 years, we have been trying to build our own capacity. But feedback from industry suggests that large projects, especially high-tech projects, are facing challenges in completion due to these restrictions," the source said, adding that the government is now weighing options for easing investment rules for some companies.

The softening of the government's stand on China was evident in the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament on Monday. "To boost Indian manufacturing and plug India into the global supply chain, it is inevitable that India plugs itself into China's supply chain. Whether we do so by relying solely on imports or partially through Chinese investments is a choice that India has to make," the report said, hinting that the anti-China policy has been detrimental to India's manufacturing sector.

Officials said the government has eased the visa rules for Chinese technicians already working in firms availing the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, and is working to streamline the visa process for Chinese workers for non-PLI companies too.

Oppn says most states got a raw deal, walks out of RS

SP's Akhilesh Yadav greets Sonia Gandhi during an Opposition protest alleging discrimination in the Budget, in New Delhi on Wednesday | PTI

Mallikarjun Kharge's mataji barb

When Nirmala Sitharaman stood up to rebut, Mallikarjun Kharge said, "Let me speak... *Mataji bolne mein toh expert hain, mujhe maloom hai.* (Let me finish. Mataji is an expert in speaking, I am aware of that)." Rajya Sabha Charman Jagdeep Dhankar shot back saying Sitharaman, 64, was like a daughter to Kharge, 82

Rs 7,559cr for rly projects in K'taka

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Karnataka has been allocated Rs 7,559 crore for railway projects in the Budget

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

A day after the General Budget was presented, members of Opposition INDIA bloc, including Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, on Wednesday staged a brief walkout from the Rajya Sabha over the alleged neglect of most states except Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, in fund allocations.

Leader of Opposition Kharge criticised Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for ignoring many states in the Budget, adding it was *kursi bachao* (save the chair) document.

His remarks drew a sharp rebuttal from Sitharaman, who said never in the past had the names of all states been taken in the Budget, not even during the UPA rule. For example, Maharashtra was not named, but that did not prevent the Union Cabinet from approving the ₹76,000-crore Vadhavan port project in Dahanu in the state last month, she retorted.

"This is a deliberate attempt of the Opposition, led by the Congress, to give an impression to people that 'oh, nothing has been given to our states, it has only been given to two states'," she said. It led to a brief Opposition walkout after which they returned to the House.

In the second half of the session, Opposition members continued to describe the Budget as anti-federal and anti-poor, with some demanding a white paper on the production-linked incentive scheme.

Speaking on the Budget, former finance minister P Chidambaram cautioned the government against taking inflation lightly, saying every family is hit hard by price rise. He also wondered if the proposed employment-linked incentive (ELI) has been mooted as the existing PLI scheme failed to generate employment.

Trinamool Congress member Jawhar Sircar alleged that the Budget had ignored West Bengal. "I have not seen such a lacklustre Budget. This is a Budget which is a fig leaf for plutocracy, for a rule by the rich," he charged.

Responding to the TMC charge, Sitharaman said several schemes launched by PM Narendra Modi in the last 10 years for West Bengal have not been implemented in the state.

Man enters PG in city, stabs woman to death

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A man armed with a knife entered a women's paying guest (PG) facility in the city on Tuesday night and allegedly murdered a 24-year-old woman. According to the police, the man stabbed the girl several times after slitting her throat at her room on the third floor of the PG facility on 1st Cross Road, 6th Block, VR Layout, Koramangala.

The deceased has been identified as **Krithi Kumari**, an employee of a private company. Kumari, who hailed from Bihar, was murdered between 11.10 pm and 11.20 pm. The police suspect that Kumari knew the accused. Kumari reached her PG facility around 9 pm. The accused entered the PG building when its caretaker was outside and the main door was open, the police said.

The accused fled after other girls raised an alarm. The police recorded the statements of the girls there. They have taken the CCTV footage from the PG facility and surrounding areas. They have also obtained Kumari's Call Data Records (CDR). Three police teams are investigating the case, a police officer said.

Meanwhile, DCP (South-East Division) Sara Fatima said the accused has been identified and efforts are on to nab him.

Landslide: Truck found on riverbed

Uttara Kannada DC Lakshmi Priya with police officials visits the landslide spot in Shirur on Wednesday | EXPRESS

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @ Shirur (Uttara Kannada)

THE teams involved in the search operation on Wednesday managed to locate the truck driven by Arjun from Kerala on the Gangavalli riverbed at Shirur in Uttara Kannada district.

Efforts are on to lift the truck from the riverbed with help of Navy divers and radar experts. The district administration coordinated with ISRO, Indian Navy and Army, NDRF, SDRF, Coast Guard, and the Fire and Emergency Services Department to help the teams. However, the operation could not be continued because of heavy rain.

The operation began at 6 am with divers searching the riverbed. Uttara Kannada DC Lakshmi Priya and SP Narayan supervised the operation. P5

MUDA ROW

Oppn targets Siddu, stages overnight stir

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

BJP and JDS legislators staged a dharna in both Houses on Wednesday night in protest against the Assembly speaker's decision of not allowing a debate on the alleged irregularities in allotment of sites by Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka alleged that Speaker UT Khader acted in a partisan manner and did not allow the House to discuss the MUDA issue in which Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is allegedly involved. "The Speaker, who should be neutral, is acting as Congress president in the House," he charged.

He said the speaker allowed a discussion on the alleged corruption in Bhovi Development Corporation under BJP rule, but refused to entertain the Opposition's demand for the debate on the alleged irregularities in MUDA.

Khader defended his move stating that a judicial probe into the alleged irregularities in MUDA is on and hence, there is no need for the debate on it. "I don't want to set a wrong precedent by allowing a debate on the matter when a judicial probe is on," he said. P6

EXPRESS READ

Jawan martyred, terrorist killed in Kashmir encounter

Srinagar: A soldier was martyred and a terrorist killed in an encounter in J&K's Kupwara district, officials said on Wednesday. The shootout happened as a joint team of the Army and the police were conducting a search following reports of terrorist presence in the area | P10

Govt staff to be hired through societies headed by DCs

Bengaluru: The state government is all set to hire employees through societies headed by deputy commissioners of respective districts. Labour Minister Santosh Lad said salaries will be paid directly to the employees on time henceforth without involving any agencies | P4

Can accused seek removal of verdict after acquittal?

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

CAN an accused, after being acquitted in a criminal case, seek removal of the judgment revealing his identity from the public domain under the right to be forgotten? The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to examine this knotty issue in detail and settle the law.

A three-judge bench led by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud was hearing an appeal by Bengaluru-based legal website Indian Kanoon against a Madras High Court order asking it take to down a judgment that revealed the identity of a person who was acquitted in a rape and cheating case.

Indian Kanoon's counsel told the court that the law on the issue appears to be unclear because the high courts of Gujarat and Kerala have earlier ruled that there was no right to be forgotten in such cases.

"There is a genuine question of law emerging from contradictory judgements from different high courts," said lawyer Abiha Zaidi, appearing for the website.

The bench, also comprising justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, observed that courts sometimes order redaction of names in sensitive cases but pulling down the entire judgment would be far-fetched.

The bench said such a precedent would lead to a situation where the litigants in commercial disputes may say that the judgements be removed as they may reveal financial information about the litigating parties.

In its plea, the legal website said the Madras HC order "adversely impacts the freedom of speech and expression of the petitioner and the public at large, guaranteed by Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution as well as the petitioner's freedom of trade, occupation and profession."

There are no specific clauses in Indian laws to define the 'right to be forgotten'. In August 2017, a nine-judge bench headed by then CJI J S Khehar had declared the right to privacy a fundamental right under Article 21 (right to life and personal liberty) of the Constitution, adding that it would include the right to be forgotten and the right to be left alone.